

Winton Hills Residents Connect with Trails

By: Ellen
Berninger, CHES

SUMMARY

The Winton Hills Community was in need of access to transportation, recreation and food. With low car ownership in the community they had to explore alternative methods to offer safe passage out of the community. A wooded trail that took them off of the main roads and directly to their desired destinations was just the answer. Thanks to Community Captain, Ms. Dazree Williams, the trail is being designed with the community in mind.



CHALLENGE

The 4,787 residents of Winton Hills are geographically isolated and are keenly aware of the transportation and access challenges they face every day. There are few businesses, service providers or opportunities for play within the neighborhood which means residents, young and old, often have to travel in and out of the community on a regular basis for jobs, food, health care, schools, and recreation. The community has a low rate of car ownership, only 15% according to the US Census. Transit options are not ideal as cost, scheduling and access to important stops and routes are barriers for many residents. Sidewalks and bike lanes, where they exist, are often impassible or perceived as unsafe due to high traffic volume on nearby streets. This has left many residents feeling stuck in the neighborhood.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IS KEY

If you would like to get involved with the Winton Hills Trail Project please contact the Winton Hills Community Council at whcc4848@gmail.com or Ellen Berninger with the Creating Healthy Communities Program at the Cincinnati Health Department at ellen.berninger@cincinnati-oh.gov or 513-357-7256

The trail has brought a sense of warmth to children of Winton Hills collectively giving them the sense that anything is possible and they were able to connect to long missed friends family and lost and hidden treasure history of the community.

- Dazree Williams
Community Captain

SOLUTION

The Winton Hills Neighborhood Council partnered with the Cincinnati Health Department and local trail group Groundwork Cincinnati to explore trail options. Groundwork Cincinnati is currently building the Mill Creek Trail, the trail will run less than one mile from Winton Hills and will eventually connect to a loop trail that will allow for travel all around the city. The Neighborhood Council hired a Community Captain, Ms. Dazree Williams, to work with the Health Department to engage community members around creating a trail project that would create a meaningful connection between the isolated community, public transit stops, the grocery store and the Mill Creek Trail.

RESULTS

Dazree excelled at her role as Community Captain and engaged her neighbors and their children around the idea of a trail that would lead out of the community and improve access to bus stops serving desired routes, local businesses and recreation areas. Community members rallied around a wooded trail they remembered from their childhood that had fallen into disrepair but offered a direct route right to where they wanted to be. Dazree lead countless walks around the trail and shared her vision for the trail and all that it could be. A survey of neighbors participating in the walk audits shows that not only do residents feel like they had a say in the trail design which will make them more likely to use it - but all of the neighbors said they would like to continue to participate in community projects in the future.

SUSTAINING SUCCESS

The completion of the current project will include a professional set of design plans that the community can use to procure funding for the building phase of the trail project. The large base of community participation and support for the project will help to ensure the project is not forgotten before funding is secured. Additionally, the community hopes to build on the success and engagement to take on even more community improvement projects and continue the growth and revitalization of the neighborhood.

